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BY MARILYN TERRELL

Check out these 10 outrageous facts.



BEFORE TOOTH PASTE WAS INVENTED, SOME PEOPLE CLEANED THEIR TEETH WITH **CHARCOAL**.

ALL OF TODAY'S PET HAMSTERS CAN BE TRACED BACK TO **ONE HAMSTER FAMILY** THAT LIVED IN SYRIA IN 1930.



IF HUMANS CAME IN AS MANY SIZES AS DOGS, WE'D RANGE FROM **THREE** TO **EIGHTEEN** FEET TALL.



A WOMAN IN CALIFORNIA REMEMBERS ALMOST EVERY DAY OF HER LIFE...



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World Records! kids.nationalgeographic.com/Videos

BIG PET SPIDER

You won't complain about walking the dog again. Meet Rosi the goliath bird-eating spider. She holds the record for the largest pet spider. Rosi's body is more than four and a half inches long but covers a dinner plate when her legs are stretched out. Rosi may look creepy, but she's friendly and easy to care for. Most pet goliaths eat live insects—even though they'd probably prefer a live mouse.

—Jonathan Schafer



100 YEARS OF KISSES

CHOCOLATY RECORD!

Got a sweet tooth? Then this record-breaker is for you. The largest individual chocolate is a 12-foot-tall Hershey's Kiss that weighed 30,540 pounds—more than 3 million individual Kisses. The sweet treat took nine days to build and was covered with 16,460 feet of foil wrapping. Too bad for chocolate lovers that the builders eventually melted most of it down.

—Jonathan Schafer



MOST PIERCED WOMAN



Just getting your ears pierced takes guts. Try getting 4,225 piercings! Elaine Davidson is the most pierced woman on record.

Since her current record was verified, Davidson says she's added nearly 2,500 more all over her body. She's used to weird looks from people. "They either love the piercings or hate them," she says. "But I love them. That's what matters." She's also used to questions such as, "How do you sleep?" The answer: Just like you do!

—Kristin Hunt

viDEo game CENTRAL

BY MARK MACDONALD

EXPLORE YOUR WORLD!

Ever wonder what lies outside your hometown? Or deep in the ocean? Or even far out into the stars? Well, it's time to find out! Pick up any of these games and you can be out exploring exotic, faraway lands in no time—and still be home for dinner.



SIMANIMALS

Wii
In *SimAnimals*, you can become a virtual park designer, caretaker, and zookeeper, all in one. Find the right type of soil to plant a tree, and water the tree to make it grow. Later you can shake the tree (using your Wii remote) for nuts and seeds to make more plants or to feed squirrels. Once you gain your animal friends' trust by caring for and playing with them, bigger critters like bears and deer will come to your forest. It's up to you to maintain the balance of plants and animals to make a healthy environment.



TIP #1: Unlock all the animals in the game by pressing the Z button on your Wii remote and entering the code "verasmenagerie."
TIP #2: Enter "rodsittlforest" at the same spot to open all sections in the game, or enter "georgesbotanics" to unlock all the different plants.

SPORE GALACTIC ADVENTURES

PC
Why limit yourself to exploring our tiny little planet when billions of worlds are out there? This new *Spore* add-on includes plenty of outer-space adventure—everything from simple goals like winning a race or solving a puzzle, to more complicated missions like freeing a group of alien slaves from an evil giant robot. You can even reunite the galaxy's most popular musical group. Best of all, if you ever get tired of the levels included with the game, a simple mission editor makes it easy to create your own.



TIP #1: Use the Adventure Creator to disguise objects and trick your friends. For example, a birthday cake you make for someone playing your level will give them an "explosive" surprise when they pick it up.
TIP #2: Another sneaky trick: Set the power on a jump-pad to high and place it under a teleporter exit. Now hide the teleporter entrance, and anyone who stumbles upon it will get launched halfway across your planet!

THE LEGENDARY STARFY

Nintendo DS
This game is all about the adventures you can have exploring the world under the sea. Join Starfy as he travels land, ice, and sea, avoiding bad guys and obstacles in his quest to rescue his bunny buddy. If you get stuck, transform Starfy into new creatures with special powers, like a ghost that can travel through walls or a dragon that can use its flaming breath to burn through plants. You can even team up with a friend in wireless multiplayer and use your combined strength to push aside boulders or double-team giant boss monsters.



TIP #1: After you complete the game once, hit the R button on the stage select screen to access an all-new level, World 9, as well as a Sound Test and Boss Mode.
TIP #2: Complete Boss Mode once to unlock the final secret stage: World 10.

green scene

BY JILL YAWORSKI

MAKE A REUSABLE LUNCH BAG!

Did you know that kids throw away about 67 pounds of lunch waste each year? That's about the same weight as an average 8-year-old boy! So before you chow down, make sure your lunch is garbage-free. By packing only what you can eat, reuse, or recycle, you will reduce the amount of waste you contribute to landfills. Start creating a waste-free lunch by ditching the brown paper bag and making your own reusable lunch bag.

YOU WILL NEED

- Old pair of jeans
- Scissors
- Ribbon or cord
- Needle and thread, or sewing machine
- A parent's permission

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Cut a 14- to 16-inch section from one of the pant legs.
- 2 Fold a half-inch strip around the top to create a place to string a cord. Sew it down, making sure to leave a small opening at both ends.
- 3 Thread a three-foot length of ribbon or cord through the opening at the top to make a drawstring.
- 4 Cut an additional piece of fabric about one inch larger than the leg hole to create the bottom of the bag.
- 5 Turn the fabric inside out and sew the two sections together at the bottom.
- 6 Decorate the lunch bag with things from around your house, such as buttons and patches.

Buy snacks in large packages instead of individually wrapped ones. You will cut down on the amount of plastic packaging that ends up in landfills.

Put your food in reusable containers.

Drink from a thermos instead of a disposable juice box.

Swap plastic tableware for a reusable set.



MYTHS

BY JAMIE KIFFEL-ALCHEH

THE TRUTH ABOUT 5 SUPER-WEIRD TALES

Don't swallow that gum! If you do, it'll stay in your stomach for the next seven years. Or will it? This story is actually an urban myth: a made-up tale told as fact. Many urban myths were started to scare people into behaving, but the stories have been told so many times that some adults believe them. We asked experts for the story behind five urban myths—and busted them once and for all.

BUSTED!



THE MYTH Chewing gum takes seven years to digest.

WHY IT'S NOT TRUE

Gum is made from a substance similar to rubber, so it's impossible for the acid in your stomach to break it down. But that doesn't mean the gum sticks around. It can't adhere to the slippery lining in your gut, so as long as you don't make meals out of it, gum will come out of your body with the rest of your waste. "In a couple days, it comes out looking pretty much the same as when it went in," says David E. Milov, a doctor at Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando, Florida.



THE MYTH Turkeys are so dumb that they'll look up during a rainstorm and drown.

WHY IT'S NOT TRUE

Just as you do, turkeys reflexively cough when anything irritates their nostrils. "If water comes in, they'll start coughing," says turkey expert Eric Gonder. So why the tale? Some turkeys used to have vitamin deficiencies that caused "stargazing." "It made them tilt their heads back," Gonder says. Today farmers know how to prevent stargazing—and that there's no truth to the myth. "Turkeys prefer to be outside, even in rain," says turkey farmer Robin Follette. "We've never had one drown."

THE MYTH

Tapping a soda can keeps it from spraying when you open it.

WHY IT'S NOT TRUE

Soda is fizzy because of a gas called carbon dioxide (CO₂). At the top of the can is a little extra CO₂ that's released with a harmless hiss when you open the soda. But if you shake the can, that gas mixes with the soda, making it more bubbly and creating foam that sprays out. Many people think tapping the can will burst the new bubbles and settle the foam. But the only way to defizz the foam is to absorb it into the liquid. "That takes time, not tapping," says Joseph F. Dues of Indiana's Purdue University. So if a prankster hands you a shaken soda can, let it sit for at least 15 minutes. Then you can open it spritz-free.

**THE MYTH**

If you don't wash your hair, spiders will live on your head.

WHY IT'S NOT TRUE

Sure, if you don't wash your hair for a long time, tiny bugs might start living there. But will spiders invade to eat those bugs? Nope. Most spiders need webs to catch insects. "Spiders aren't going to make a web on something that's moving around, such as your head," says spider expert Rod Crawford of the Burke Museum in Seattle, Washington. Plus spiders need lots of space to build webs—and there isn't enough room on a hairy head.

**THE MYTH**

Fortune cookies come from China.

WHY IT'S NOT TRUE

Fortune cookies aren't even found in China! "They most likely came from Japan," says Jennifer B. Lee, author of *The Fortune Cookie Chronicles*. The proof: an 1878 Japanese book that shows a man baking fortune cookies. Chinese people weren't associated with the treats until at least 1907. "The cookies were brought to California by Japanese immigrants," Lee says. It's still a mystery why fortune cookies are now served mostly in Chinese restaurants.

HOW TO SPOT AN INTERNET HOAX

- ✗ The e-mail begins with "This is not a hoax!" and ends with a request for you to forward it.
- ✗ The story happened to "a friend of a friend."
- ✗ It concludes with a creepy lesson.
- ✗ You've never heard about it in a newspaper or magazine.
- ✗ An adult you know has heard a similar story.



BEHIND THE SCENES
OF THE NEW MOVIE

Where the Wild Things Are

BY JOHNNA RIZZO

In the new movie *Where the Wild Things Are*, Max may think his wolf costume is cool, but his dog definitely does not. Wearing the outfit, the kid chases the poor pooch around the living room! When his mom sends Max to his room, he instead sets sail to a land full of eight-foot-tall, parent-free party-throwers called Wild Things. NG KIDS went behind the scenes and discovered some very wild things about the movie.

MAX IS
CROWNED
KING OF
THE WILD
THINGS.

WAVE RIDER

To get to the Wild Things' island, Max steers a sailboat across a stormy sea. Even though the actor who plays Max (Max Records) learned to sail for the scene, he wasn't all alone on Australia's Port Phillip Bay. "An instructor was hidden in the boat, just in case the water got too rough," Max says. Producer Vincent Landay adds: "There were no visual effects in this scene. It was a little scary."

ANIMAL STARS

Creature designer Sonny Gerasimowicz had some pretty weird animal combinations on the brain when he created the movie's Wild Things.

Douglas looks like a white cockatiel with a fluffy tuft on his head. But the feathers on his arms end in human-shaped hands.

Real goats head-butt each other when challenged, but goatlike Alexander opts to play possum when threatened, curling up till the danger passes.

KW has gigantic webbed feet like a duck. To defend herself, though, she jumps up and kicks both appendages in front of her, just like a kangaroo.

The movie is based on the book *Where the Wild Things Are*, by Maurice Sendak.

DIRT SHOWER

When dirt clods start flying between two groups of Wild Things, the creatures lob masses of dusty clumps everywhere. Real dirt clods would have been too heavy to stay aloft for as long as the filmmakers wanted, so they created lighter dirt clods out of ground-up chalk stuffed into pantyhose-type material. The chalk bombs made the perfect dust clouds when they hit the ground.

TINKER

When a giant tree crashes down, Max and a Wild Thing named Ira barely avoid getting squashed. But Max and Ira were in no danger: Filmmakers used real video of a tree falling down, then digitally added it to the scene. But Max still needed to know when to get out of the way. "I wore an earpiece, and the director told me exactly when to jump," he says.



CREATURE FEATURE

During the Wild Rumpus—a playful yet rambunctious party—the Wild Things dance, rumble, and drop-kick each other around their fort. Their faces have good times written all over them, but in reality, the mouths and eyes on the creatures didn't move. The facial expressions were created on a computer and digitally added later.

CAROL THE
WILD THING
TELLS MAX
ABOUT ALL THE
COOL STUFF
THE ISLAND
OFFERS.

Land DOWN Under

Where the
Wild Things Are
was filmed mostly in
Australia. And there
are lots of wild
things about
Australia!

The kangaroo—
an animal native to
Australia—can move
forward but not
backward.

Cookies are
called "biscuits,"
candies are "lollies,"
and cotton candy
is known as
"fairy floss."

The wombat
makes square drop-
pings. The distinctive
shape keeps the drop-
pings, which tell other
wombats another
is nearby, from
rolling away.

The Tasmanian
devil can eat a third
of its body weight in a
single sitting. That's like
a 60-pound kid scarfing
down 80 hamburgers
for dinner!



MAX GETS A
BETTER VIEW
SITTING ON
CAROL.

FLIP TRICKS

When Max rides atop of Wild Thing Carol, it may look like the only thing keeping the kid from falling is the creature's horns. But Max had a little help—you just can't see it. "Cables were attached to a harness inside my wolf suit," Max says. The cables connected to a tall scaffold that would catch him if he fell. It also allowed him to be silly, performing crazy high jumps and other stunts when he was off camera.

ANIMAL

FUN & GAMES AT THE ZOO

BY ALINE ALEXANDER NEWMAN

Wild animals lead busy lives. They spend hours every day just finding food. But in the zoo, animals don't have much to do. Keepers fix their meals, schedule their time, and even choose their roommates. "This inability to perform natural behaviors causes stress," says David Shepherdson, research coordinator at the Oregon Zoo. So how can zookeepers help?

The trick is to provide variety. Keepers give animals new experiences and let them make choices. This environmental enrichment can range from redesigning a chimp enclosure to giving pandas a toy to play with. It takes time, effort, and imagination. But it's worth it. "The animals are more content," says Shepherdson. To see why, keep reading.

TRUCE!

Chaos sometimes reigned at the chimpanzee exhibit at the Los Angeles Zoo in California. The chimps felt trapped in their enclosure when poorly behaved human visitors occasionally teased the chimps. These people taunted them from a viewing point above the exhibit, sometimes even throwing trash down on the apes. The stressed chimps reacted by throwing trash back and tearing around their enclosure banging on things. Something needed to change.

"I wanted to encourage fun behavior between chimps and people," says zoo planner Jon Coe. He designed a new habitat that includes high perches like artificial tree stumps and rocky ledges so that chimps meet visitors eye-to-eye. And he gave chimps choices. An ape can hide from view or crawl through an artificial log to greet a curious child approaching from the other end. A glass barrier separates the two. Now, instead of pitching projectiles over the walls, chimps and visitors enjoy calm, friendly encounters.





> P A S S T H E P O P C O R N

Kevin Hodge, carnivore supervisor at the Houston Zoo in Texas, had a 290-pound problem. What should he do with Krishna the Amur tiger when the lawn in her exhibit needed mowing or the trees needed pruning? For safety's sake, he had to lock the powerful 19-year-old feline (inset) inside her night quarters, but he worried that she would be bored. So he moved a television into the hallway outside her enclosure and started a video. "We thought she'd watch awhile and be done," says Hodge, "but she plopped herself right in front of the TV and watched the whole thing." When a keeper absentmindedly blocked her view, Krishna stared at him and growled. When he moved, the tiger's eyes returned to the screen.

Watching videos became part of Krishna's routine. But the big cat was fussy. She wouldn't watch just any movie. It had to be *The Lion King*.



SHARE BEAR

Di Di, a teenage giant panda, never had a toy. He lived in a small enclosure in China, where his keepers didn't yet understand the importance of enrichment. Ron Swaisgood, codirector of the panda team at California's San Diego Zoo, visited there and took pity on the bored bear. "He needed something to do," says Swaisgood, who brought Di Di a big burlap sack stuffed with straw. The panda was suspicious at first. He sniffed. He jumped back. He poked it with his paw. Then suddenly, he pounced. Clenching the bag in his teeth, Di Di somersaulted around his pen.

His neighbor Fei Fei watched through the fence. Seeing her, Di Di stopped and dragged his sack over. He shoved it toward Fei Fei (right). The wire mesh between them bulged and flexed as the two bears played together like pandas in the wild.



DIFFERENT STROKES

The 11 squirrel monkeys at Alma Park Zoo in Brisbane, Australia, spent half their time sitting around. To get them up and moving, animal scientist Julia Hoy asked their keepers to hide cut-up fruits and vegetables around their enclosure. This increased the monkeys' activity.

"But every one of them behaved differently," says Hoy. "Some thrived on the extra work and others turned aggressive, biting zookeepers or stealing." So Hoy set up surveillance cameras to monitor their behavior.

One free thinker, Pugsy, focused on those cameras. They were mounted inside glass boxes, and Pugsy hung upside down in front of them (below). She danced back and forth and studied her face. Once she smeared dirt on the lens with her thumb. Who did Pugsy think the monkey in the reflection was? Nobody knows. But one thing's for sure: If she could talk, she'd probably say, "Forget hiding my food. I'm just happy hanging out with my new playmate."



TASTE OF HOME

The rare Indian pangolin—a small, scale-covered mammal (below)—rarely reproduces in captivity. But wildlife biologist Brij Kishor Gupta may have solved that problem. When the Nandankanan Zoo in Orissa, India, could not get any of its six pangolins to breed, he advised the zoo's staff to visit where pangolins still survive in the wild. The staff dug up red soil mixed with small stones found there and brought it back to the zoo. They piled it three feet deep in the pangolins' cage, building a mound on top so the animals could make a burrow. Meanwhile, Gupta gathered colonies of the red ants pangolins prefer, along with dead leaves, and placed them in the enclosure. Finally the pangolins seemed to feel at home. "In no time, they started mating and reproducing," says Gupta. Soon the first Indian pangolin ever born at the zoo arrived.



I WONDER IF THE NBA SCOUTS ARE WATCHING MY DUNKING SKILLS.



POLAR BALL

Even Boris the polar bear celebrates Halloween at Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium in Tacoma, Washington. But he doesn't dress up. He plays pumpkin basketball in his pool. Lead polar bear keeper Derek Woodie supplies the pumpkins, and the game begins. The 1,000-pound point guard dribbles underwater, slapping the buoyant veggie down with his huge paw (above). When the pumpkins pop back up, he tosses them into the air. During timeouts, he floats on his back, hugging a pumpkin to his chest.

Two hours later, it's game over. Boris wraps his giant mouth around a partly squashed pumpkin and carries it out of the pool. Lying down, he tucks it under his head and closes his eyes. "He's just like a kid," says Woodie. "The newest toys are always more fun."

Pumpkins are so much fun that Boris can't "bear" parting with his.



SHOWER POWER

Rub-a-dub-dub. Who needs a tub? Certainly not the African elephants at Ohio's Columbus Zoo. After keepers had a shower mounted inside the elephants' barn, the pachyderms no longer had to wait for someone to drag out a hose. Elephant manager Harry Peachy dabbed peanut butter on the motion-activated switch only once. The elephants quickly learned that they could trip the switch (above, left), hurry to the shower (above, right), and bask in a two-minute spray of warm water whenever they wanted.

Belinda used the shower a lot—but not for bathing. She used it to soften her hay by soaking it before eating. And this elephant “queen” didn’t bother operating the switch herself. She’d place a bundle of hay under the showerhead, look over her shoulder, and give a low rumble. One of her “ladies-in-waiting” would rush across the paddock and turn on the shower. “If Belinda wanted more water,” says Peachy, “one of them would come back and do it again.”

FOOD FOR FUN

Life seldom goes as planned, and neither do enrichment activities. “You have to try a lot of things,” says consultant Valerie Hare. Even then, you get surprised.

Take the bamboo sharks at Moody Gardens in Galveston, Texas. Hardly man-eaters, these slender swimmers are so gentle that divers hand-feed them. To get the sharks and rays that share their tank eating more naturally, Hare devised a feeding tube. Divers stuffed the tube with fish bits and placed it on the gravel in the bottom of the tank.

The shark that found the tube spent 40 minutes pushing, flipping, and rolling it with his nose. But when the food floated out, sharp-eyed rays swooped down and sucked up every bite. As for the shark, he kept playing with the pipe. Why? Apparently he was hungry for fun instead of fish.



NATIONAL
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PHOTOGRAPHY
CONTEST 2009
FOR KIDS

Grab your camera! Take a photograph of something in your world that fits one or more of these four categories: humor, animals, scenery, or people. The First Place Winner in each category will go on to compete against other First Place Winners from other National Geographic photography contests being held internationally. The best photo will win the photographer a Grand Prize trip to Washington, D.C.

You
could win
a trip to
Washington,
D.C.!

HUMOR



ANIMALS



SCENERY



PEOPLE



**Entries must be postmarked by
November 2, 2009, so enter today!**

Go online for official rules and entry requirements.
kids.nationalgeographic.com/contests/Photos

CONTEST PRIZES

- 1** Four First Place Winners (one for each category) will win a National Geographic Kids Pet Cam, a copy of the National Geographic Kids Almanac 2010, a National Geographic 1,000-piece puzzle, and entry into the Worldwide National Geographic Society International Photography Contest for Kids for a chance to win the Grand Prize trip. The Grand Prize Winner (selected from First Place Winners around the world) will win a five-day, four-night trip to Washington, D.C., plus a special tour of National Geographic Society headquarters.
- 2** Four Second Place Winners (one for each category) will win a National Geographic Kids Ant Farm Gel Colony, a copy of the National Geographic Kids Almanac 2010, and a National Geographic 1,000-piece puzzle.

IMPORTANT ENTRY INFORMATION

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. ACHIEVING A WINNING ENTRY IS YOUR CHANCE TO WIN. To learn Official Rules, go to kids.nationalgeographic.com/contests/Photos. Open only to legal residents of the United States (including Alaska and Hawaii) excluding U.S. territories ages 6 to 14 on November 1, 2009. Employees of Sponsor National Geographic Society and its related parties are ineligible. Entries must be postmarked by November 2, 2009, and received by November 9, 2009. Limit one entry per person per category. Categories are Humor, Animals, Scenery, and People. To enter, take a photograph in any of the four categories. The Photographs Entry must comply with Entry Requirements I described in Official Rules. Four (4) First Place Winners (one per category) will win a National Geographic Kids Pet Cam, a copy of the National Geographic Kids Almanac 2010, and a National Geographic 1,000-piece puzzle (AWD). They will also be automatically entered into the Worldwide National Geographic Society International Photography Contest for Kids in which the winners from this contest and other National Geographic Society for Kids contests being conducted in other countries around the world will compete for the Official Rules governing the Worldwide National Geographic Society International Photography Contest for Kids see nationalgeographic.com/npc. Four (4) Second Place Winners will win a National Geographic Kids Ant Farm Gel Colony, a copy of the National Geographic Kids Almanac 2010, and a National Geographic 1,000-piece puzzle. All other winners (200 per category) will win a National Geographic Kids Pet Cam. Odds of winning depend on number of entries received per category and skill of entrant.

Amazing Animals

About one in ten people who celebrate Halloween plan to put their pet in a costume this year.

GET ME 20 CO'S OF DOGGIE TREATS, STAT! DR. A.J. THE SHETLAND SHEEPDOG IS READY TO MAKE A HOUSE CALL.



The top five pet costumes of 2007 were devils, pumpkins, witches, princesses, and angels.



HATSUME THE LAB MIX IS COSTUMED AS A FAIRY. WONDER WHAT KIND OF SPELL SHE WOULD LIKE TO CAST ON HER OWNER?

BEASLEY THE ENGLISH BULLDOG IS SERVING THREE TO FIVE FOR BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE.

HALLOWEEN

PET PARADE

This month you may have to share the streets with four-legged trick-or-treaters. Nearly 20 million dogs will be dressed as ghosts, wizards, and other creatures this Halloween—about 4 million more than last year. NG KIDS found some of the craziest costumes.



**HOLY HALLOWEEN,
BATMANI MIMZI
THE MIXED BREED
IS READY TO
TAKE OVER THE
WORLD AS "THE
PENGUIN"**

Instead of candy, which is bad for pets, treat your furry friend to Halloween snacks made just for them. Check out your local pet store for ideas.



**HAZEL THE
BOSTON TERRIER
MAY BE WONDERING
IF SHE CAN FLY IN
HER TINKERBELL
COSTUME.**



**GET IT? FISHER THE GREYHOUND
IS A GREYHOUND BUS!**

These pets like wearing costumes, but your pet may not. *Never* force your pet to do something it does not want to do.



**DECKED
OUT IN
HER BLING,
PRINCESS
THE TOY
POODLE IS A
REAL PARTY
ANIMAL.**



**ALL DRESSED
UP FOR THE
BALL, "TINI" THE
CHIHUAHUA
PULLS
CINDERELLA'S
COACH.**

BAT Rescue

BY SCOTT ELDER



MANGO
GETS A
BATH.

How helpless babies survive a terrible storm

As the wind howls and the rain pounds down in eastern Australia, a two-week-old bat clings tightly to her mother, who is hanging upside down in a tree. The gray-headed flying fox is one of hundreds of newborn bats in this large group, called a camp. And these baby bats are in trouble. The violent storm is intensifying, and the furry creatures have not yet learned to fly. If the wind knocks them from the shelter of their mothers' wings, the newborns—each weighing less than four ounces—will fall to the ground. Trees depend on flying foxes for pollination, just as many plants depend on bees. The bats' survival is crucial to the forest's survival.

Finally the fierce thunderstorm ends. Roy Webster, a volunteer with Wildcare Australia, worries that a few babies might have fallen and checks on the camp in the forest. The scene is far worse than he expected: Hundreds of baby flying foxes have plummeted as much as 30 feet and now cover the ground, helpless. Some are tangled in bushes. Trish Wimberley, director of the Australian Bat Clinic & Wildlife Trauma Centre, rushes to the scene with six other wildlife rescuers. "We have broken legs and broken arms, all sorts of injuries," she says. A tiny newborn female they name Mango has torn her wing badly during the tumble. She also has developed pneumonia.

"THIS IS A REAL DISASTER," Wimberley thinks to herself. But soon more than a hundred volunteers arrive to help the injured babies. After three long days, more than 350 little flying foxes—including Mango—are gently transported to Wimberley's clinic. Bones are set, and antibiotics are given. Volunteers bottle-feed milk formula to the newborns every three hours.

Even with all that care, some vets doubt that Mango can survive. But only exhaustion stops Wimberley. And when the rescuer dozes off while tapping little Mango's back to help her breathe, Mango gently wakes up her caregiver by brushing Wimberley's face with her wing. "It's like she's saying, 'Don't give up on me,'" Wimberley says. She nurses Mango through the night, then works on her ripped wing. She soaks it in a special medicine bath and applies antibacterial ointments. Caregivers massage Mango's wing to prevent scarring.

SOON MANY YOUNG FLYING FOXES move from bottle-feedings to chopped fruit such as apples. They lap up milk formula or nectar, and they also learn to fly. After two and a half months at the clinic, the bats move into a huge aviary—an outside enclosure. They practice flapping their wings while hanging upside down, taking short flights, and crash-landing at first.

Visiting the flying foxes a few weeks later, Wimberley recognizes Mango in the crowded aviary and sees that her wing has healed. "I'm thrilled," she says. "When I see Mango fly, I'm so proud of her."

After a month of flying practice, the aviary doors open and the flying foxes begin exploring the wild. Thanks to the hard work of volunteers like Wimberley, these once-injured babies will grow up to help the forest thrive as they carry pollen from tree to tree. And that, Wimberley hopes, just might change how people think of bats. "They're not scary—they're like little puppies with wings," she says. "When people see flying foxes up close, their whole view of bats changes."

MANGO'S
INJURED
WINGMEDICINE
FOR A HURT
WING

HEALED!

CITY OF BONES

A creepy burial site lies beneath the streets of Paris.

BY BEKAH WRIGHT

A chill hangs in the air along a maze of shadowy tunnels. Suddenly a ghoul-like skull emerges in the dark. It's gazing out from a six-foot-tall wall of human bones, arranged as if an artist were creating a masterpiece. The skull seems to be asking, "Has anyone seen the rest of my bones?"

Rather than running away screaming, most visitors keep walking through this creepy labyrinth. What is this eerie resting place? It's the catacombs of Paris, France, a sort of underground art gallery of bones from about six million people.

BIRTH OF A BONEYARD

Centuries of death from the plague, smallpox, war, and France's infamous guillotine resulted in the city's cemeteries literally

overflowing, putting people at risk of disease. In 1785 the French government needed to relocate the bodies, but where?

The solution: tunnels under the city that had been mined for limestone to build famous structures such as Notre Dame and the Louvre. In 1786 black-veiled figures began dumping carts of bones into the catacombs, a nightly parade of the dead.

Around 1810 Napoleon I ordered that many of the bones be arranged into the artistic patterns still seen today. (The rest of the bones are hidden behind the displays.) Since then, visitors have been lining up to check out this spooky piece of Paris history.

THE EMPIRE OF DEATH

The catacombs are accessed through an ominous dark door. Visitors then descend a spiral staircase 65 feet down. A sign greets them in the dark: "Arrête, c'est ici l'empire de la mort." Translation: "Halt, this is the empire of death."

Anyone with the courage to continue follows 17 stops along the tunnels. Walls of arm bones reach out, a creepy welcome. Leg bones arranged with other types of bones create beautiful patterns, as if they're saying death doesn't have to be dreary. At the Sacellum Crypt, hundreds of grinning skulls wedged within a stack of bones seem to leer at visitors.

Most tourists are soon ready to leave this spooky gallery, but before they can, their bags must be checked. Believe it or not, some visitors think human bones make great souvenirs!






SPECIAL HALLOWEEN SECTION



DO NOT ENTER

Although the authorized area of the catacombs is only about a mile long, there are many more tunnels beneath Paris that aren't open to the public. It is here that catacombs fans called cataphiles put on headlamps, grab maps, and sneak underground through hidden entrances. "The first time I went into the forbidden catacombs, I entered through a hole in the ground," says Morthicia, who, like most cataphiles, uses an alias. "It felt like I was being swallowed by the Earth." Like other illegal explorers, she's trying to stay a step ahead of special police who patrol the catacombs and impose stiff fines on trespassers. And with good reason: One unfortunate man disappeared in the tunnels in 1793 and never returned.



In 2004, one group of cataphiles built a temporary underground theater in the unauthorized part of the catacombs, complete with electricity and Internet access. There was even a security system with the sound of barking dogs to alert them if anyone came. The only trace they left: a note for authorities that read, "Don't look for us."

BY ERIN WHITMER

**Bet you
didn't
know**

6 crazy facts about creepy crawlies

1

One of the world's **fastest snakes**—the black mamba—slithers up to **seven miles an hour**.

3

The largest known **ant supercolony** stretches nearly **4,000 miles** through Portugal, Spain, France, and Italy.

5

Scorpions glow under **black light**.

2

The **longest worms** can grow to at least a **hundred feet**.

4

More **beetles** live on Earth than any other **creature**.

6

A male African cicada can make a sound as loud as a **power mower**.

Fun Stuff

games, laughs, and lots to do!

SPECIAL HALLOWEEN SECTION



SPELLBOUND

This wacky wizard is trying to make ten different animals magically appear. But he keeps creating objects that rhyme with the animals' names instead. For example, number one is a balloon rather than a baboon. Can you figure out which animals he meant to create? Bon us: Do other animal names rhyme with any of these objects?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

SPECIAL HALLOWEEN SECTION

COSTUME PARTY
USE SNORKEL GEAR, SILLY HATS, INEXPENSIVE JEWELRY, AND OTHER ACCESSORIES TO MAKE CLEVER COSTUMES FOR YOUR PUMPKINS.



MAKE A SCENE
ARRANGE YOUR JACK-O'-LANTERNS SO THEY'RE "REACTING" TO EACH OTHER.



FACE-OFF
SKIP THE CARVING KNIFE AND PAINT FUNNY FACES ON YOUR PUMPKINS INSTEAD.



SHOOT FOR THE STARS
CARVE PLANETS, FLOWERS, FISH, SPIDERS, OR ANYTHING ELSE YOU LIKE.



LIGHT SHOW
THIS PTERODACTYL WAS CREATED BY AN ARTIST, BUT YOU CAN GIVE ANY PUMPKIN THIS UNUSUAL GLOW.



BOLD AND BOO-TIFUL
PAINT PUMPKINS WHITE FOR A GHOSTLY EFFECT.



TRACE A DESIGN ON THE PUMPKIN. THEN PEEL OFF THE OUTER SKIN IN A FEW PLACES, LEAVING THE FLESH UNDERNEATH INTACT. PLACE A LIGHT INSIDE AND ADMIRE YOUR WORK.

Back Talk

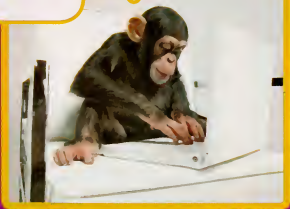
I'll hold him
down while
you guys
tickle him.



1. Fill in the thought balloon.
2. Cut out the entire picture (or make a photocopy of it).
3. Mail it along with your name, address, phone number, and date of birth to NG KIDS, Back Talk, P.O. Box 96000, WASHINGTON, DC 20090-6000. Selection for publication in a future issue will be at the discretion of NG KIDS.

What do
YOU think
this lemur is
thinking?

From the May Issue



Hey, George, how's
life in the jungle?

Alex M., 10
North Vancouver,
British Columbia, Canada

Google search:
Jane Goodall.

Jackson S., 12
Ogilvie, Minnesota

I should have gotten
a banana instead of
an Apple.

Kassandra M., 13
Salt Lake City, Utah

Finally, the great Amer-
ican novel is done!

Christina V., 9
Penfield, New York

Dear King Kong,
I am a big fan...

Daniel N., 12
Henderson, Nevada

I wish people would
quit monkeying around
on my computer.

Caelum C., 7
Hays, Kansas

Zookeeper on 2 me. BRB.

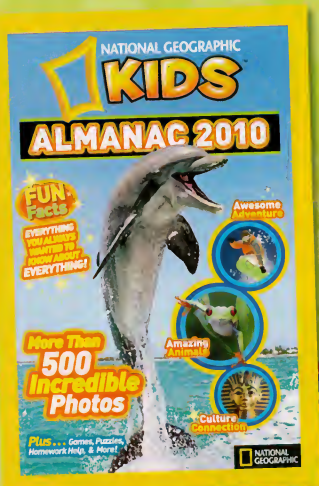
Sam M., 12
Chula Vista, California

My fingers are getting
tired; hold on while I
switch to my toes.

Yoela and Arigati Z., 10 and 15
Los Angeles, California

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What in the World?

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ORANGE YOU GLAD?

These images show close-up views of things that are orange. Unscramble the letters to identify what's in each picture. Too tricky? [ANSWERS ON PAGE 33](#)



SFHI



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GSNI



ERNGAO



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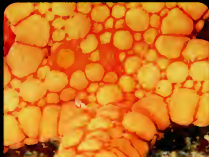
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LRCAO



CFRAITF
SEOCN



ESA TARS



APAAYP

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Funny Fill-In

Fright Night!

BY JILL YAWORSKI

Ask a friend to give you words to fill in the blanks in this story without showing it to him or her. Then read out loud for a laugh.

SPECIAL
HALLOWEEN
SECTION

On Halloween night I heard a(n) _____ knock at the front door. But my friends weren't supposed to show up for _____ more minutes to go trick-or-treating. "Is there anyone out there?" I asked into the darkness. No one answered. Suddenly all the _____ turned off at once. A(n) _____ ran down my spine as I _____ toward the closet and _____ hunted for a flashlight. But all I found was a(n) _____ and last year's _____ beach towel. Just then the light from the _____ shone through the window. I saw a wicked _____ and a(n) _____ animal outside, _____ toward me! " _____ !" I screamed. Then I heard _____ laughing like a(n) _____. That's when I realized that the scary creature was just a mask and cape that he had attached to a(n) _____. And the animal? That was our pet _____. Looks like I got a trick instead of a treat.



Art Zone

MONSTER MASH

NG Kids readers used their monster-size imaginations to draw these cool ghouls.



▲ The Fuzzy Wubble

Lauren C., 13
Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma



▼ Claw Dude

Brannan H., 11
Frenchburg, Kentucky



▲ Dimitri the Bat Lord

James S., 11
Wrentham, Massachusetts



◀ A Friendly Monster

Kha L., 14
Olive Branch,
Mississippi

▼ The Grim Graper

Cabot A., 13
New Hope, Pennsylvania





Phantom Mushroom
Ben C., 10
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

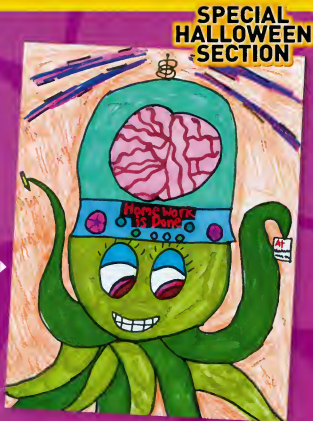


Homework Is Done
Carley B., TK
Long Beach, California



Medusa's Dragon
Jessica L., 11
Timonium, Maryland

Thira the
Seathumb
Katherine S., 10
New York, New York



Super Math Creep
Jacob H., 10
Rockford, Illinois



Draw a spooky haunted house.

Send your original drawings to
NG KIDS—Haunted House Art Zone
P.O. Box 98002
Washington, DC 20090-8002

Include your name, address, phone number, date of birth, a title for your drawing, a statement that it is your own work, and the name of your parent or guardian. Your parent or guardian must sign a release for publication of your illustration. Submissions become the property of the National Geographic Society, and all rights thereto are transferred to the National Geographic Society. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned. Selection will be at the discretion of NG KIDS.

Answers

1. boboon, 2. eel, 3. snake, 4. duck, 5. owl, 6. kitten, 7. other, 8. porcupine, 9. crickets, 10. spider
"What in the World?" (page 32)
Top row: fish, crossword sign, orange
Middle row: corn cobs, golden lion tamarin, coral
Bottom row: traffic cones, sea slug, papaya

"Spelbound" (page 27)

"Spelbound" (page 27)

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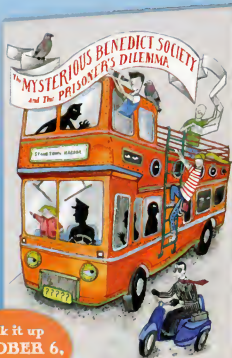
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